

CONSIDERATION OF OTHERS

A LEADERSHIP IMPERATIVE

Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel
Leadership Division

Consideration of Others **A Leadership Imperative**

Introduction

As leaders, we have an obligation to foster a positive command climate and develop a culture in which all Department of the Army Personnel, soldiers and civilians, treat one another with dignity and respect.

The Consideration of Others Program is a tool, which introduces leaders to a method of cultivating such a climate. This program uses small group interaction as the forum for resolution and learning. If we are to inculcate a sensitivity and regard for the feelings and needs of others, we must institutionalize this program in order to maintain a climate of dignity and respect.

The Consideration of Others Program addresses a philosophy that goes to the heart of military readiness. It allows leaders an opportunity to impart the knowledge of Army values and encourages soldiers to learn and adopt these values as their own. This program is not limited to any particular type of subject or circumstance and covers the broad spectrum of civility, respect for others, and military teamwork.

Consideration of Others is a command program. Equal opportunity personnel play a key, but not solo role. Consideration of Others involves linking the awareness, the actions, and the responsibility of the individual soldier or civilian to his or her duties as members of a military team. Consideration of Others addresses the major aspects of the human dimension of combat readiness. It will promote organizational excellence at every echelon of command

What it is the Consideration of Others Program?

A successful human relation's climate is one that maximizes our soldiers' and civilians' awareness of how their individual actions effect others. It emphasizes respect for and between soldiers and civilians of all races, creeds, gender, religion, or national/ethnic heritages, and enables them to clearly understand the linkage between their actions towards others and their unit's ability to accomplish the mission. As described in the U.S. Army Human Relations Action Plan, human relations is treating others with dignity and respect; thereby incorporating their individual talents into the success of a team.

The Consideration of Others Program originated at the US Military Academy, West Point. Due to the importance and success of the program, the Chief of Staff instituted it throughout the Army. The Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel was designated as the proponent for this program. Army Major Command (MACOM) commanders and Equal Opportunity Advisors were given information on the Consideration of Others Program through various command channels. The Consideration of Others Program has become a core requirement of the Army Service Specific Training at the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute.

The Consideration of Others program does not replace existing command emphasis programs. It is not a vehicle for "sensing sessions" or for initiating EO/EEO complaints. It is a commander's program, which is not limited to one mandatory set of lesson plans. Consideration of Others is a tool which commanders can use to systematically improve their organizational climate.

It is designed to create, maintain, and sustain an environment of respect and dignity throughout the Army. The program's objectives are to educate and provide a forum for soldiers and civilians to discuss issues that the command has deemed important to combat readiness. The program requires leaders to conduct classes in small groups utilizing an interactive format instead of a lecture format. The leader should be the group facilitator. The goal of small group interaction is to get soldiers and civilians to process information in the context of their roles as members of military teams. An additional goal is for leaders to be actively involved in helping soldiers learn and internalize the Army's values and accept the important dimensions that diversity and respect for others bring to mission accomplishment.

What is the role of commanders?

The Consideration of Others Program is mandatory for all commands. *It should be tailored to the specific needs of each local command.* Commanders will implement Consideration of Others Program down to detachment, platoon, or squad level.

A military unit must excel as an organization in order to successfully accomplish its mission. As the difficulty of the mission increases, so does the need for excellence in a unit's organizational character. The Army uses the term "unit cohesion" to describe organizational character. This term has a great deal of value, not the least of which is its acceptance by a wide range of Army authorities as a common term of reference to use when discussing issues relating to how soldiers operate and fight as a team. The exact term we use is not critically important. What is critically important is that our soldiers live and work in the type of organization which makes them want to excel and give their total commitment to the unit's mission; to exhibit in practice the "selfless service" we value as American soldiers.

The Consideration of Others Program is based on the commander's analysis of a unit's needs. It emphasizes the actions and responsibilities of the individual soldier and civilian. This program has been designed from the outset to leverage existing information technology so that both already-existing and newly-created resources (lessons and programs) used by local commands will be made available Army wide.

Consideration of Others program is a tool which focuses on the vital linkage between the individual soldier and civilian and his or her role as a member of a military team. The capability of each of your subordinates to recognize that their attitudes, actions, and words affect others in the unit; and their willingness to take responsibility for those actions, and words- to the point of changing them when necessary –is what Consideration of Others is all about.

The Consideration of Others Program is not a "cure all" for every organizational challenge. Your job as a commander has been and always will be extremely challenging. Consideration of

Others is a tool to focus your assessment, orchestrate your efforts, and allow you access to the resources other commanders have used when faced with the same or similar challenges. Commanders and other leaders must be aware of these key concepts of the Consideration of Others Program:

- Commanders are responsible for the effectiveness of this program
- Leader involvement at all levels down to teams and sections
- Small group focus with approximately 10-20 members
- EOAs are primary resources assisting with coordination and training
- Consideration of Others is not limited to equal opportunity but covers all aspects of the human dimension of combat readiness

Consideration of Others must be easily and readily adaptable to each commander's priorities and each individual unit's needs. The design of Consideration of Others Program parallels the operational or mission planning design that is used by commanders daily. It is necessary for a commander to complete the following actions to facilitate a successful Consideration of Others Program:

- Assess your command climate
- Identify primary or key areas of concern
- Identify specific training needs
- Determine priorities
- Identify and commit resources

The resources which commanders can potentially bring to the Consideration of Others program are extensive. At brigade or above, Equal Opportunity Advisors will have received training on the Consideration of Others program and may serve as overall coordinators or even at times, as facilitators. Commanders at all levels have access to key NCO leaders (CSMs, First Sergeants, Platoon Sergeants, Squad leaders, Section Sergeants), chaplains, medical personnel, IG, legal personnel, EEO specialists and civilian academic or professional sources. Any of these individuals could play important roles as training resources when you develop your command's unique Consideration of Others emphasis.

Consideration of Others has been developed for you, the commander. An assessment, small group setting, trained personnel, and your personal commitment and involvement in the program are elements that will make or break Consideration of Others in your command. It is a tool designed to help you build unit cohesion and assist you in the complex task of leading soldiers. This vital task must be done well if we are to fulfill our primary mission: to fight and win the Nation's wars.

What are some of the signs of a viable Consideration of Others Program?

While Consideration of Others does not specify a required amount of training hours quarterly or annually, it should be incorporated as an integral way of doing training. A unit Consideration of Others Program should include the following:

- A unit policy that includes the commander's guidance for Consideration of Others training for that unit.
- Training NCO will maintain a training schedule of Consideration of Others classes taught and a roster of facilitators.
- Every soldier and civilian in that command should be aware of the Consideration of Others Program and its intended goals.

Prior to Consideration of Others training for civilian employees who are in a collective bargaining unit, commanders must notify union(s) of the intent to implement the Consideration of Others Program and provide them details regarding anticipated implementation procedures. Questions concerning labor relations obligations with regard to the Consideration of Others program should be addressed to the applicable Civilian Personnel Advisory Center.

What is the role of the EOA?

CSA has directed that Equal Opportunity Advisors at all levels be proponents for this command program. Army Service Specific training at DEOMI will include a block of instruction on the Consideration of Others Program. The Equal Opportunity Advisors (EOA) are key to successful implementation of the Consideration of Others Program at brigade level or above (See AR 600-20, para.6-2h).

This program will result in an enhanced role for Equal Opportunity Advisors (EOAs) in the command structure and increase the interest of leaders in the importance of diversity. It will also impress upon soldiers that the lasting, far-reaching, and detrimental effects of alcoholism, racism, ethnocentrism, gender discrimination, unsafe sex practices, etc. on our mission can be reduced by programs emphasizing the Army value of "respect." It is important to note that while EOAs are primary players, they are not the sole players. They are a resource available to teach and coordinate at Brigade level and above and assist at battalion and below. EOAs should rely on other resources to provide expertise when appropriate. The Consideration of Others Program will provide us a mechanism to ensure that the human dimension is not neglected in our quest for combat readiness.

Consideration of Others Handbook

The Consideration of Others handbook is available at web-site www.odcsper.army.mil. The handbook highlights eight focus areas that are supported by seventeen suggested lesson plans. Each focus area reinforces the role of the individual soldier as a responsible member of a military team.

Consideration of Others Program Facilitator/instructor Training

There is no mandatory training level or certification standard for Consideration of Others facilitators. Commanders may or may not have the luxury of having trained or certified small group facilitators available for the Consideration of Others program. Leaders must be the most capable personnel available, clearly able to handle themselves appropriately in a small group setting. You or your training officer/NCO should use care in selecting leaders for small groups.

It is recommended that facilitators be sergeants, civilian equivalents or above. If necessary, EOAs may establish a training course similar to the EO representative course to teach basic small group facilitative skills to potential facilitators. Installations and Divisions are responsible for facilitator training.

Soldier Support Institute has a facilitator-training program available for commands wishing to institute such a program.

Small Group Dynamics- One key to a successful program

The key element to the Consideration of Others Program execution is small group instruction. Most lesson plans call for discussions rather than lecture. In all human interactions there are two major ingredients: content and process. Content deals with subject matter of the task upon which the group is working. In most interactions, the focus of attention is on the content. The second ingredient, process, is concerned with what is happening among and to group members while the group is working. Group process or dynamics deals with such items as morale, feeling, atmosphere, influence, participation, styles of leadership, leadership struggles, conflict, competition, cooperation, feedback etc. In most interactions, very little attention is paid to process, although it is the major cause of ineffective group action. Sensitivity to group process will better enable leaders to diagnose group problems early and deal with them most effectively. Since these processes are present in all groups, awareness of them will enhance a person's worth to a group and make him or her, a more effective group participant.

The facilitator plays a large part in determining the spirit of the small group. Facilitators should encourage discussions, allow Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to contribute to the fullest extent without dominating the group, keep group discussions flowing, and be aware of time. In keeping the group discussions flowing, it is important that no one person dominates, the group is kept on task, and that rank and leadership position do not interfere with group dynamics. It is also critical that prejudices held by members of the group do not become disruptive but are dealt with appropriately.